

US 2 Traffic Safety Corridor Update

Prepared by WSDOT, WSP, and WTSC

March 15, 2010

This update has been prepared in response to Governor Gregoire's request at the January 14, 2010, GMAP forum on Changing Strategies for information on the effectiveness of the US 2 Traffic Safety Corridor.

Background

On October 8, 2007, Governor Gregoire designated US 2 from I-5 to Stevens Pass as a traffic safety corridor. The program, a partnership between WSDOT, WSP, WTSC, and local entities, includes a number of engineering, enforcement, and education activities. The program began on March 18, 2008, with the unveiling of new traffic safety corridor signs at River Park in Sultan. The program is scheduled for completion in the Spring of 2010 with the exception of five construction projects that will begin this summer and be completed in the Summer of 2011. Additional detail on actions is provided below.

Has the safety corridor program been effective?

We are collecting and beginning to analyze before and after collision data to determine the effectiveness of safety corridor program activities. At this time, there is not sufficient "after" data to draw firm conclusions; we will have enough in about one year. However, preliminary data on cross-over collisions show positive results. One of the key improvements on U.S. 2 has been the installation of centerline rumble stripes to address crossover collisions. In the three years before the program began there were 12 fatalities, 6 of which involved "head on" or "hit front" vehicle collisions. In the 21 months since the program began, there has been only one head on fatality collision.

Action Detail:

A. Engineering and Construction Projects by WSDOT

Section 1: I-5 to Monroe West City Limits

- Added eastbound peak period shoulder use on trestle, completed April 2009
- Scoping project to improve northbound Bickford to westbound US2
- Added eastbound US2 Major Accident count day sign May 2009

Section 2: City of Monroe

- Adjusted signal timing and connected signals to I2 central control system
- Initiated work to improve pavement marking and signing for westbound US2 at SR522 intersection
- Added signs on mast arms "Right Turn on Red Yield to U-Turn"
- SR522 interchange project in design

Section 3: Monroe East City Limit to East Gold Bar City Limit

- Added centerline rumble strips, September 2008
- Modified eastbound left turn lane at Sultan Basin Rd. to improve traffic flow
- Added chevrons at curve between MP19.97 and 20.16
- Added centerline extension at Fern Bluff Rd intersection
- Vegetation removal and new circular guide posts at 245th and Fern Bluff Rd intersections
- Connected signals to I2 central control system

Section 4: Gold Bar East City Limits to Stevens Pass

- Added westbound US2 accident count day sign, August 2009
- Added centerline rumble strips, September 2008

Throughout Corridor

- Added “Traffic Safety Corridor” signs, March 2008
- Added fatality markers
- Added traffic related signing to support safety including speed limit reminder, pass with care, truck crossing, and street name signs
- Installed two electronic collision signs on US 2 that automatically count the number of days since the last fatal or serious injury collision on the corridor. The eastbound sign was installed May 2009 and the westbound sign was installed August 2009. The Washington State Patrol resets the signs when a serious or fatal collision occurs.

Additional Projects Underway

- An additional \$10 million of safety improvements are scheduled for construction between Monroe and Gold Bar, to be completed by the Summer of 2011.
 - Build a new two-way left turn lane between 245th Ave SE and 153rd Place SE east of Monroe
 - Close the south leg of the intersection with Fern Bluff Road west of Sultan
 - Extend the existing two-way left turn lane in Sultan and reconfigure the intersection of 11th Street and the entrances to the park-and-pool lot
 - Close the western connection of Sultan-Startup Road to US 2 East of Sultan
 - Extend the existing two-way left turn lane in Gold Bar to Dorman Road

B. Enforcement Activities by WSP, Snohomish County Sheriff, and Monroe Police Department - April 2008 through December 2009

- 22,803 violator contacts (18,521 by WSP)
- 14,364 citations (11,491 by WSP)
 - 2,635 aggressive driving citations (1,978 by WSP)
 - 9,948 speeding citations (7,895 by WSP)
 - 487 DUIs (376 by WSP)
 - 1,245 seat belt citations (999 by WSP)

C. Education and Community Outreach by WTSC and Partners

- Corridor group members put on three wintertime “coffee stops” at a park in Gold Bar, where they talked with drivers about staying safe on US 2. The corridor project was also represented at a variety of community events, including the Sultan Shindig, National Night out against Crime in Gold Bar, Bike Rodeo in Sultan, and Gold Dust Days in Gold Bar.
- We earned more than 25 media hits in daily and weekly papers and TV and radio stations.
- To raise awareness about the corridor, group members distributed informational materials and promotional items at events and businesses along the corridor. We distributed 10,000 information cards, 150,000 napkins, 3000 lip balms, 7000 pens, 2,500 air fresheners, 3000 litter bags and 60,000 mints